

5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT - Congressman Steny Hoyer today helped volunteers in Prince George's, Anne Arundel, Charles, and Calvert counties to rebuild and repair homes for low-income residents, and later joined volunteers for a celebratory picnic in St. Mary's County at the end of the day. Today was National Rebuilding Day, organized by Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April, the largest volunteer home rehabilitation organization in America.

"Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April is one of the most outstanding non-profit organizations in the country," said Congressman Hoyer. "Every April I look forward to participating in its National Rebuilding Day, which gives me a chance to meet wonderful people who are willing to give up a Saturday to help a neighbor in need, and to see what a difference is made - in just one day - in the lives of those whose homes are repaired."

Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April serves the poor, elderly and physically challenged by restoring safety, warmth and security in their homes. It is the largest volunteer home rehabilitation organization in America.

Prince George's County became an affiliate of the national organization in 1989, and Anne Arundel, Charles, St. Mary's and Calvert Counties became national affiliates in 1991. Across the country, lawyers, students, doctors and Americans from all walks of life become carpenters for a day as everyone pitches in to give warmth, safety and independence to help over 11,000 elderly folks, 6,000 people with disabilities and 53,000 children.

This year, Congressman Hoyer was joined by Laura Van Etten from Fannie Mae. Thanks to Congressman Hoyer's advocacy, Fannie Mae will be contributing \$15,000 throughout the Fifth District in support of the strong chapters of Christmas in April.

"So many of us have elderly relatives that want to remain in their homes instead of nursing homes, but their homes are not retrofitted with ramps that are needed for wheelchairs, grab-bars in the shower, or are otherwise unsafe or in need of repair," added Hoyer.

"The number of low-income homeowners increases each year. The current 24 million low-income homeowner families nationwide is expected to grow to an astonishing 28.5 million by the year 2010. More and more families are placed in the position of choosing between vital necessities such as food or medicine and a roof that does not leak.

"Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April works to ensure that as many of those families as possible do not have to make these difficult choices," Hoyer concluded.

Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April's mission is to preserve and revitalize houses and communities, assuring that low-income homeowners, particularly those who are elderly and disabled, and families with children, live in warmth, safety, and independence. Their goal is to make a sustainable impact in partnership with communities. While some affiliates provide year-round services, all affiliates plan and prepare for National Rebuilding Day, typically held on the last Saturday in April.

# # #